

Electoral Boundaries

Or if I want to avoid the mountain pass, which I must do sometimes in winter because of prevailing weather conditions, I can drive to Nelson and to Balfour, and then take a trip from Trail of some 75 miles. If I am on time, I will catch the ferry; if not, I must wait for one hour. Then I must take a 40-minute ferry trip. By the way, it is the longest free ferry ride in Canada and takes you across Kootenay Lake. Then I must drive another 50 miles over winding roads before I reach Creston. Even if Creston is removed from my riding I must still service those small communities to the north of Creston. I shall be still obliged to drive over the Salmo-Creston Skyway, or take the other route via Kootenay Lake and the ferry crossing.

Sometimes in winter the Skyway is closed. Inevitably the heavy traffic which moves by way of the Balfour-Kootenay Bay ferry occasions delays of up to three or four hours. In the summer months the heavy tourist traffic using that link can also occasion delays. People like to visit the beautiful Kootenay West countryside. As I say, even if Creston is removed from Kootenay West I shall still be obliged to make this trip.

I have established close ties in Creston and I regret the mere contemplation of losing them. I enjoy working for and with those people. They are more closely linked by social and economic ties to Kootenay West than to Kootenay East, and they will be the first to tell you. Indeed I fear the loss of one of the most productive agricultural areas in British Columbia, small in square miles but high in productive capacity.

As a trade-off for removing Creston, and this is the fourth attempt, as I mentioned before, the commission will give me Christina Lake to serve. I have many friends who are resident at Christina Lake. It is an area for the retired, a beautiful summer resort community. At present about 400 people live at Christina Lake and Cascade. I shall be delighted to serve those people to the utmost of my ability. However, the commission will oblige me to make another trip over another mountain pass, a new one known as Blueberry-Paulson pass, which is not quite as dangerous as the Salmo-Creston Skyway but which receives almost as much snow. As I say one encounters the same heavy snow loads, perhaps not quite to the extent as on the Salmo-Creston Skyway, but nevertheless it is a very high mountain pass.

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I must drive some 50 or 60 miles through completely uninhabited country, drive from Rossland to Christina Lake through two mountain passes, the Nancy Green Summit—that name will, I am sure, ring a few bells with those who read the journals—and the Blueberry-Paulson. So in losing Creston and in gaining Christina Lake I have succeeded in gaining an additional mountain pass. Bearing in mind the distances I must travel in my riding I find that this additional gain represents a very serious imposition of one more mountain pass—actually, two—over which to navigate during the winter months. I must say I do not really look forward to the prospect with a great deal of enjoyment. The compensation, of course, will be the people at the other end of that drive.

There is another concern I have for Creston. I recognise that not a great deal can really be done about it because by

[Mr. Brisco.]

act of parliament the ground rules have been established. The basis, of course, is the 1971 census which the commissioners must use as a guideline. How very unfortunate. In November of 1974 the British Columbia Research Council issued a report entitled "Population Projection". The report outlined certain statistics.

In 1974 the population of the regional district of Kootenay Boundary was 31,400. The projection for 1980 is 30,700. Conversely, in the central Kootenay area in 1974 the population was 44,600; the projection for 1980 is 47,200. In Columbia shuswap regional district the population in 1974 was 30,800. The projection for 1980 is 40,600. In East Kootenay the population in 1974 was 39,700, and the projection for 1980 is 52,400.

The first two regional districts correspond roughly to the land area of Kootenay West and will experience a growth of approximately 7.8 per cent by 1980. The second two regional districts correspond almost exactly with the new riding of Kootenay East and will experience an astounding 63.3 per cent growth by 1980. Even if we are pessimistic about future economic growth, Kootenay East will more than make up for the 5,000 or so constituents it will not get if Kootenay West keeps its present proportions, and does not include Creston. Conversely, Kootenay West, as demonstrated from the statistics, is an area of slow growth and slow development.

Therefore what will happen is that in 1980, when again we are faced with redistribution, we shall in all likelihood see the community of Creston coming back into Kootenay West after an absence of some four years. This would be the fifth political move for that community in 35 years, the fifth political trade-off, the fifth hit in the political stomach, a football that is being used to satisfy a minor statistic, a statistic which really in the long run will not have any bearing on the population density of Kootenay East.

On the basis of the burgeoning economy, the growth of the coal industry in the East Kootenays, we can continue to expect rapid expansion in the East Kootenays. Frankly, if I were debating economic development I would be inclined to observe that Kootenay West is not really anxious to accept that type of expansionary development and growth, certainly not for growth's sake.

In summary let me say I am grateful for the support I received from the municipal council of Creston, from the Chamber of Commerce and from individual constituents who have indicated to me and the commission their strong objection to being removed once more from Kootenay West.

Let me also say that should the commission in its wisdom decide that the community of Christina Lake is to be added to Kootenay West, even though it sits at the base of a natural mountainous boundary colloquially referred to as the Cascades, even though there is a 60 mile mountainous barrier, let me assure the people there that I will endeavour to represent them to the best of my ability. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity of stating the case of Kootenay West in British Columbia.

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, first I should like to congratulate you, the Clerk of the House, the *Hansard* staff, the three reporters in the gallery,